

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

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P R 211100Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY9001

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

USIA WASHDC

USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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CGUSARSUPTHAI

CINCPAC
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CDR USA CINCPAC SUPPORT GROUP FT SHAFTER HI
CNO
COMNAVINTCOM
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMUSMACTHAI
COMUSSAG
CTG SEVEN NINE PT FOUR
DIA WASHDC
III MAF
7/13 AF

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 1258

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PINS PFOR MOPS ECON CB
SUBJECT: KHMER REPORT -- JANUARY 21, 1975

GENERAL

1. WHILE FANK MADE NO PROGRESS IN REDUCING ENEMY GAINS ON TWO FRONTS AROUND PHNOM PENH, IT REOCCUPIED STRATEGIC BASES ON THE LOWER MEKONG WITH ALL-OUT TACAIR SUPPORT. MORE THAN 2,100 FANK TROOPERS AND AN ESTIMATED 3,400 KC DIED IN THE FIRST 19 DAYS OF THIS OFFENSIVE, THUS MARKING THE HEAVIEST FIGHTING EVER SEEN IN THE CAMBODIAN CIVIL WAR. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS RECEDED BEFORE MILITARY IMPERATIVES AS MARSHAL LON NOL REPORTEDLY POSTPONED INDEFINITELY ELECTIONS FOR THE RULING SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE. PRICES FINALLY RESPONDED TO WAR-REDUCED SUPPLY AND SHOWED SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN MANY FOODSTUFFS AND POL.

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)

2. MARSHAL LON NOL HAS DASHED HIS BROTHER LON NON'S CURRENT HOPES OF CONTROLLING THE RULING SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY. THE MARSHAL REPORTEDLY ORDERED THE PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE ELECTIONS INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. AS A SOP TO CONFIDENTIAL

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LON NON, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE VOTED TO CREATE A POLITICAL BUREAU JANUARY 9 WHICH WILL FORMULATE PARTY POLICY. LON NON IS ONE OF THE FIVE MEMBERS. HIS ROOM FOR MANEUVER IS CONSTRAINED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE MODERATE PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL, PAN SOTHI, AND HIS ASSOCIATES MAKE UP THE REST OF THE POLITBURO. COMMENT: LON NON WILL PROBABLY VIEW THIS AS A TEMPORARY SETBACK AND CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO DOMINATE THE PARTY.

3. KHMER BUDDHIST MONKS AND LAYMEN DENOUNCED INDOCHINESE COMMUNIST AND KHMER ROUGE RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS AND ATROCITIES IN THEIR 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THEY NOTED THEIR CONVICTION THAT THE GKR SINCERELY WANTS PEACE AND APPEALED TO THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO DO HIS UTMOST TO FULFILL HIS MANDATE UNDER THE RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE RECENT UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

4. A 107MM ROCKET HIT THE FENCE ENCLOSING THE FRENCH LYCEE DESCARTES AN HOUR BEFORE CLASSES STARTED JANUARY 20 AND PROMPTED FRENCH AUTHORITIES TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL TEMPORARILY. COMMENT: A SIMILAR EVENT JUST OVER A YEAR AGO CAUSED THE FRENCH TO CLOSE THE LYCEE AND SEND MOST OF THE SEVERAL HUNDRED FRENCH TEACHERS IN PHNOM PENH ON EXTENDED LEAVE OR PERMIT THEM TO TERMINATE THEIR CONTRACTS. LAST YEAR'S FRENCH REACTION INCREASED ENXIETY AMONG KHMER IN THE CAPITAL. A REPEAT FRENCH PERFORMANCE THIS YEAR WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO HEIGHTENED TENSION IN PHNOM PENH AT THIS TIME.

POLITICAL (EXTERNAL)

5. UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHIEM ISSUED A STATEMENT SAY-
ING THAT HE IS PRESENTLY TRYING TO CLARIFY WHETHER THE
(KHMER) PARTIES CONCERNED REQUIRE HIS ASSISTANCE TO GET
TALKS STARTED AS CALLED FOR IN THE RESOLUTION PASSED AT
THE RECENT UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. COMMENT: THE UN SECGEN
HAS TAKEN A CAUTIOUS STEP TO KEEP THE UN RESOLTUION
ALOVE EVEN WHILE SERIOUS FIGHTING RAGES IN CAMBODIA.

GRUNK/FUNK

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6. IN TWO "DECREES" RELEASED MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER THE FACT, GRUNK HAS FORMALIZED ITS NOVEMBER 1973 DECISION TO MOVE ITS CABINET "IN-COUNTRY." ON JANUARY 15 THE IN-COUNTRY PRESS AGENCY BROADCAST THE TEXT OF DECREES DATED NOMBER, 1974, WHICH FORMALLY RELIEVE ALL GUNK MINISTERS RESIDING ABROAD (EXCEPT FOR PM PENN NOUTH AND FOREIGN MINISTER SARIN CHHAK) AND CONFIRM THE IN-COUNTRY MINISTERS IN JOBS WHICH THEY HAVE PUBLICLY HELD SINCE LATE 1973. COMMENT: CONFIRMATION OF THE CABINET BY SUCH DECREES LENDS APPROPRIATE LEGALISTIC TRAPPINGS TO BOLSTER GRUNK'S CLAIM THAT IT IS A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT. RELEASE OF THE TEXTS BY THE IN-COUNTRY BRANCH OF GRUNK UNDER- SCORES THE FUNCTIONING OF AN IN-COUNTRY GOVERNMENT. IT ALSO MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO REMIND SIHANOUK, WHO RECENTLY PLAYED THE BLITHE SPIRIT ON SWEDISH TV, THAT THE KC HOLD

THE REAL POWER.

7. ARMY COMMANDER KHIEU SAMPHAN HAS CONGRATULATED HIS TROOPS FOR SUCCESSES ON THE LOWER MEKONG AND ON ROUTE 1 ALONG THE MEKONG SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH. HE CLAIMS KC CONTROL OVER TRANSPORTATION ON THE RIVER WILL HAVE "A VERY NEFARIOUS EFFECT" ON THE GKR MILITARILY, ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY.

ECONOMIC

8. RICE STOCKS IN PHNOM PENH TOTALLED 21.5 THOUSAND TONS ON JANUARY 20. AVERAGE DAILY DISTRIBUTION DURING THE PAST WEEK WAS 787.5 TONS. NO PL-480 RICE HAS ARRIVED SINCE THE LAST CONVOY ON DECEMBER 28 DUE TO THE INTERDICTION OF THE LOWER MEKONG.

9. AT A JANUARY 20 MEETING CHAIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER THE OFFICIAL RICE DISTRIBUTION LEVEL IN PHNOM PENH WAS REDUCED FROM 600 TO 540 METRIC TONS PER DAY. OF THIS AMOUNT THE MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVANTS WILL RECEIVE 200 M/T AND 100 M/T OF U.S. RICE RESPECTIVELY. THE REMAINING 240 M/T WILL CONSIST OF LOCAL RICE AND WILL BE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE NORMAL CHANNELS TO THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. THE NEW DAILY DISTRIBUTION LEVEL OF 540 M/T WILL ENSURE A 40-DAY SUPPLY OF RICE FOR PHNOM PENH.

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ENCLAVES PREVIOUSLY SUPPLIED FROM PHNOM PENH ARE EITHER TEMPORARILY SELF SUFFICIENT (KOMPONG THOM AND KOMPONG CHAM) OR WILL BE PROVISIONED BY AIR FROM KOMPONG SOM.

10. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND THE GKR CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO APPROXIMATELY 20,000 REFUGEES IN NEAK LOEUNG. AROUND PHNOM PENH, THE REFUGEE SITUATION IS GENERALLY UNDER CONTROL. FORTY-THOUSAND REFUGEES REQUIRING IMMEDIATE RELIEF ARE RECEIVING FOOD, SHELTER AND MEDICAL CARE.

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 AID-05 OPR-01 SY-04 EB-07

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P R 211100Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9002

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

USIA WASHDC

USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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CDR USA CINCPAC SUPPORT GROUP FT SHAFTER HI

CNO

COMNAVINTCOM
COMSEVENTHFLT
COMUSMACTHAI
COMUSSAG
CTG SEVEN NINE PT FOUR
DIA WASHDC
III MAF
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11. RICE, FISH, SALT AND FRUITS REGISTERED NOTABLE INCREASES IN PHNOM PENH RETAIL MARKETS DURING THE PAST WEEK. THEY ARE RESPONDING TO THE CONTINUED INTERDICTION OF THE LOWER MEKONG AND MAJOR OVERLAND SUPPLY ROUTES. PL-480 RICE ROSE 10 PERCENT; BATTAMBANG RICE 8 PERCENT; OCEAN FISH 44 PERCENT; DRY FISH 17 PERCENT; ORANGES 33 PERCENT; GREEN BANANAS 29 PERCENT AND SALT 8 PERCENT. CONVERSELY, VEGETABLES GENERALLY DECLINED, WHILE MEAT, POULTRY AND LOCAL MANUFACTURED GOODS WERE ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED. IN ADDITION TO HIGHER PRICES, THERE WERE ONLY LIMITED QUANITIES OF PL-480 RICE IN LOCAL MARKETS. KEROSENE AND COOKING GAS WERE GENERALLY UNAVAILABLE TOWARD THE END OF THE WEEK. ACCELERATED DRAWDOWNS OF STOCKS ARE BEING REPORTED FOR OTHER ESSENTIAL IMPORTED PRODUCTS SUCH AS CHEMICALS, PHARMACEUTICALS AND POL PRODUCTS. THE BLACK MARKET EXCHANGE RATE INCREASED FROM 1,700 TO 1,770 RIELS PER DOLLAR DURING THE WEEK. GOLD DECLINED FROM 180 TO 164 DOLLARS PER TROY OUNCE. THE OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE REMAINED UNCHANGED AT 1,650 RIELS PER DOLLAR.

MILITARY

12. THE KC HELD ONTO THEIR GAINS EAST AND SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH AND ARE ACTIVE NORTHWEST OF THE CAPITAL.
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ON THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM PHNOM PENH THE PARACHUTE BRIGADE HAS MADE LITTLE PROGRESS AGAINST DUG-IN ENEMY TROOPS. THE PARAS RECEIVED OVER 150 REPLACEMENTS JANUARY 19 TO COVER THE HEAVY LOSSES SINCE JANUARY 1 AND THEIR COMMANDER MAY NOW BE MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR COMBAT POWER THAN HE WAS EARLIER IN THE WEEK. THE KC HAVE EXPLOITED THEIR FAVORABLE POSITION ON THE EAST BANK TO ROCKET PHNOM PENH REGULARLY.

13. SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH, 2ND DIVISION ELEMENTS HAVE MADE NO PROGRESS AGAINST A TENACIOUS ENEMY. THE 2ND SUCCESSFULLY BLOCKED A KC ATTENNRTO FLANK THEM

BUT LOST MOMENTUM AS A RESULT. NIIUS STILL HOLD A 40 KM STRETCH OF ROUTE 1 FROM EAST OF DEI UT TO NORTH OF THE NEAK LUONG FERRY.

14. THE 7TH DIVISION AND REINFORCING ELEMENTS NORTH-WEST AND NORTH OF PHNOM PENH SPENT THE WEEK SORLTING THEMSELVES OUT. THE KC TOOK A TOWN ON THE EAST BANK OF THE TONLE SAP RIVER JUST OPPOSITE THE FANK POL STORAGE FACILITY 10 KILOMETERS NORTH OF THE CITY WHICH THEY TEHN MOENALD # WITH LITTLE DAMAGE. THE 28TH BRIGADE, HOWEVER, MOVED FROM ITS ACTIONS ON THE WEST BANK OF THE MEKONG ACROSS THE PENINSULA TO PUSH THE KC NORTH, THUS RELIEVING SOME PRESSURE ON THE FUEL DEPOT. THE KC ALSO SUCCESSFULLY INFILTRATED THREE REFUGEE VILLAGES SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN DIKE AND WEST OF THE FUEL DEPOT, BURNING JK KJ AE R # ONE VILLAGE AND MURDERING A NUMBER OF CIVILIANS.

15. THE KC MAINTAINED A STEADY BARRAGE OF GENERALLY INEFFECTUAL 107MM ROCKETS AND 75MM RECOILLESS RIFLE FIRE AGAINST POCHENTONG AIRPORT FROM POSITIONS WEST-NORTHWEST OF PHNOM PENH. ONE SALVO OF EIGHT HIT THE AIRBASE JANUARY 19 DESTROYING A CIVILIAN DC-3. ANOTHER SALVO HIT INSIDE THE BASE ON THE 20TH INDICATING THAT KC GUNNERS FINALLY HAVE THE RANGE.

16. THE KC TOOK THE INITIATIVE IN SIEM REAP AND BATTAM-
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BANK AS FANK WITHDREW TROOPS TO REINFORCE PHNOM PENH. SINCE JANUARY 14 THEY HAVE CUT ROUTE 6 NORTHWEST OF SIEM REAP IN SEVERAL PLACES. SOUTHWEST OF BATTAMBANG A STRONG KC FORCE IS THREATENING MAUNG RUSSEI ON ROUTE 5.

17. ATTACKING KC FORCES LOST OVER 300 KILLED IN TWO BATTLES IN THE NEAK LOEUNG-BANAM AREA SOUTH ALONG THE MEKONG. FARTHER SOUTH ON THE WATERWAY FANK, IN AN EFFORT TO CLEAR THE RIVER FOR VITAL RESUPPLY CONVOYS, SUCCESSFULLY LANDED AT THREE KEY POSITIONS WHICH THE KC HAD OVERRUM DURING THE FIRST PHASE OF THE OFFENSIVE. THE KC, HOWEVER, SEIZED AN IMPORTANT POST JUST NORTH OF THE BORDER JAUNARY 20.

DEAN

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 1258; PARA. 14.
AS RECEIVED. CORRECTIONS TO FOLLOW.

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